

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY East Germany

REPORT

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1. In early February 1955, the East German purchasing agencies were accepting animals of smaller weights than earlier. For instance, pigs were being taken for slaughtering which weighed only 160 - 170 pounds (Pfund). This was being done because, in contrast to late fall 1954, not enough animals were being delivered and because too many suckling pigs (Ferkel) and shoats (Laeufer) had been contracted for nationalized farms and consequently there were not enough fattened animals left. As a result, the closing of contracts for suckling pigs and shoats suddenly came to a halt.
2. Because of the meat shortage, the hunting season for rabbits was extended two weeks.
3. More attention than usual was being paid to the prevention of the sale of grain from farmer to farmer. Severe penalties were being enforced for this offense, since it was expected that there would be a serious shortage of seed in the spring - especially of clover and seed grain (Saatgetreide).
4. Many independent farmers on land allotted to them by the East German Government (Neubauern) would like to give up their farms because of the general bad conditions, but the government offices ordinarily will not take the farms back. Where an exception to this is made, any animals involved are taken back at the planning price (Sollpreis), not at market value.
5. There was a general shortage of farm workers. The numerous dismissals of laborers by nationalized industries and government offices had been expected to force the workers to go to the farms, but very little change in the situation was observed. The workers showed little interest in working on farms for small pay. Even at the Machine and Tractor Stations, where the pay is moderately good, the young workers complained about exploitation and too much overtime work.

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6. Numerous OeLBs (Oertliche Landwirtschaftsbetriebe) had been made into LPGs (Landwirtschaftliche Produktionsgenossenschaften). Although the OeLB workers are paid by the hour while the LPG members receive a share of the net yearly proceeds of the LPG and furthermore, can be assigned a small holding of farm animals whose cost is not charged against them, the OeLB workers did not wish to work on LPGs for they believed their earnings would be less because of epidemics and bad crops. Also, unmarried men were not interested in keeping livestock. Because of this, plans were being made to use the hourly pay system on the OeLBs which were made into LPGs. However, it was not known how the bookkeeping would be handled in connection with the changeover nor where the funds would come from to cover the expenses involved.
7. The OeLBs were also in difficulties because of a shortage of basic fodder items. Animal-raising continued to be unsatisfactory and milk production was generally low. There were many OeLBs where the average yearly yield per cow was less than 2,000 liters.
8. Considerable losses were expected in the potato crop because of the impractical field storage methods. Many field storage huts had collapsed, and a brown rot which was observed when the 1954 crop was harvested had appeared again, especially at OeLBs.
9. The IFA tractors, most of which were received during the past few years, were in worse condition than ever, and deliveries of parts for them and of new agricultural equipment such as plows, harrows, ridge-drills (Drillmaschinen), etc. were fewer than previously.

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